

I am a professional writer, former journalist, currently working as communications coordinator for a transportation agency in Ohio. I have also performed for the past 14+ years in a local semi-acoustic original folk-rock fusion band. We write all our own music and do a few cover songs by artists who have influenced us and to keep some familiar music in front of our audiences.

I write music, play piano and keyboard, and sing solo and backup vocals. We have recorded four self-produced albums to date. So we are unsigned musicians. Collectively and as solo artists the four of us have probably written 200 songs. We play throughout Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, including Dayton, Eaton, Springfield, Kettering, Yellow Springs, Middletown, Hamilton, Columbus, Cincinnati, OH, Richmond and Muncie, IN and Newport, KY.

We have submitted a few songs to a radio station that airs a one-hour program of local musicians. It's called Joe's Garage on 103.9 Radio, a Clear Channel station in Dayton. Many local musicians used to get air play on Antioch University's station in Yellow Springs before it went corporate and fired many of its local hosts. We were interviewed and played live on a small educational station in Cincinnati also.

Judging by what is heard locally, local programming is practically nonexistent. One of the best stations around--WOXY in Oxford--had a lot of local programming and they have gone out of business.

The FCC should define local music as locally originated, as in written by local musicians. Something could be locally produced in a studio that was not original or not indigenous to the area.

The FCC should require that stations permit local programming decisions. What seems to happen is that all the stations are owned by huge conglomerates that dictate playlists, which exclude local programming.

It could be at the discretion of the program managers or station owners, but it could and should encompass all those categories. Many of these categories, such as local sports and news, are already permitted. Local music is probably the most excluded in my experience.

It should count for local goodwill, not towards local programming.

The FCC should disallow payola but discourage conglomerates from using this as a way to further exclude local talent. Large companies like Clear Channel who have dropped independent promoters have made the situation of localism more difficult by centralizing choices for airplay. This makes it many times more difficult for local artists to receive air play. The nationally signed artist does not need systems that show favoritism to them. They already have millions of dollars of promotion backing them. The unsigned artists, many of whom are equally talented, struggle to get paid at local gigs, let alone get air play. Let the customers decide. Run contests, whatever, but give power to the local producers in radio as mandated by the FCC. Stations should not accept payments to play anything. If, however, groups agree to play on air for free to promote a viable local fund raising event, that should be legitimate. Many bands are happy to give their time to fund raising events (as m

ine has many times) but appreciate some form of recognition, even if it's just a mention by a local DJ that they are on board.

I don't know anyone who likes to be fooled. This practice is no different than any other type of lie. It's insulting to the audience and should not be allowed. If you're running prerecorded talent, then you should have to make that perfectly clear. Then we can change the channel.

National playlists are why radio has become exceedingly boring. Where's the creativity? Where's the interest? The only place you can hear a creative playlist is on educational stations and they are getting worse and worse about allowing local producing, too. Now that I live back in my home town, which is a smaller market, I very much miss stations in Chicago (where I lived for several years) that had stations competing with each other with different varieties of music and a wide range of music. There were on-air DJ's who were local personalities and who made up their own playlists to support their brand of humor or programming. I miss it very much!

I'm not aware of any of these in my area, but I imagine they exist. They would probably be one way that local musicians could reach a wider audience.

Thanks for addressing this issue in a public manner.